



News Release

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April Showers Bring May Flowers...and Pollen

Prevention can help nip allergies in the bud

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Are you sneezing, sniffing and itchy? Have you had a nagging cough, or are you wheezing or short of breath? Allergies and asthma often trigger these symptoms in the spring when pollen counts are high. The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) encourages those with seasonal allergies and asthma to take extra precautions this spring.

“During the spring, those with seasonal allergies and asthma can suffer with increased symptoms like sneezing, a runny nose, and itching in the nose, roof of the mouth, throat, eyes, and even ears—depending on what a person is allergic too,” said Jenny Johnson, Health Program Specialist with the UDOH Asthma Program.

Many people with asthma also have allergies that can make their asthma worse. You can help control your symptoms by:

- Keeping windows closed at night to prevent pollen and mold from drifting into your home. Keep car windows closed when driving.
- Reducing activity between 5 am and 10 am when pollen counts are higher.
- Staying indoors on windy days and when the pollen count or humidity is high.
- Letting someone else mow the lawn, and staying away from freshly cut lawns. Mowing stirs up pollen and mold.
- Drying sheets and clothing in the dryer, not on a clothesline, so pollen and mold don't collect on them.

Talk to your doctor about other ways to manage your asthma, including consistent use of the proper medications.

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Seasonal allergies, also called “hay fever,” affect more than 35 million people in the United States. In Utah, seasonal allergies are often triggered by mold and pollen from trees like maple, oak, cottonwood, locust, ash, cedar, sycamore and willow. Pollen levels are typically lower on rainy, cloudy and windless days.

If you think you might have asthma, come find out at a free Asthma Screening on Saturday, May 17, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Fashion Place Mall Center Court in Murray, Utah.

Visit the UDOH Asthma Program Web site at www.health.utah.gov/asthma for pollen counts and tips on managing asthma during allergy season.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.